

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Attached is a proposed Amended Figure 4.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please delete claims 1-15.

Please add the following new claims 16-29.

1 *Sub B* 16. (New) A method for the production of expandable plastics granulate from
2 a plastics melt and a fluid blowing agent that is, when at an elevated pressure within a
3 predetermined pressure, range only partly soluble in the melt, the method comprising the steps
4 of:
5 dispersing the blowing agent in the melt with extensive shearing
6 of the melt thereby creating a mixture;
7 retaining the mixture within a predetermined pressure range for a
8 predetermined retention time;
9 subjecting the mixture to substantially little shearing during the
10 predetermined retention time;
11 cooling the mixture to a temperature that is several degrees
12 Celsius above the solidification temperature of the melt ;
13 granulating the cooled mixture; and
14 acting on the mixture with static mixer elements.

1 *Sub E* 17. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the cooling is performed at least
2 partly by components that also act on the mixture for static mixing.

1 18. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the cooling is performed in a static
2 mixer having elements crossing each other and formed as heat exchanging pipes.

1 *Sub C²* 19. (New) The method of claim 16 further comprising extruding the mixture
2 after cooling to form strands and chilling formed strands with a coolant.

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1 Sub E 20. (New) The method of claim 19 wherein the chilling is performed with
2 water.

1 21. (New) The method of claim 19 further comprising forming the formed
2 strands into granules by disintegration.

1 22. (New) The method of claim 16 further comprising adding at least one
2 additive to the melt.

1 23. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein a pressure drop during the
2 dispersing step is larger than a pressure drop during the retaining step.

1 24. (New) The method of claim 23 further comprising increasing the pressure
2 which the melt is subjected to in-between the dispersing step and the retaining step.

1 25. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein a pressure drop during the cooling
2 step is larger than a pressure drop during the retaining step.

1 26. (New) The method of claim 25 further comprising increasing the pressure
2 which the melt is subjected to in-between the retaining step and the cooling step.

1 27. (New) The method of claim 25 further comprising increasing the pressure
2 which the melt is subjected to in-between the retaining step and the cooling step.

1 Sub E 28. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the dispersing step is performed in
2 a first static mixer and the retaining step is performed in a second static mixer.

1 29. (New) The method of claim 28 further comprising pumping the mixture
2 into a third static mixer having elements crossing each other and formed as heat exchanging
3 pipes for performing the cooling step.

REMARKS

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 16-29 are pending.